

SOME FEATURES OF THE CENTRAL BUDGET

The Union Finance Minister Mr. Morarji Desai while presenting the Central Budget before the Parliament last week has announced further tax incidence on the people. It is no wonder that the fiscal measures stipulated in the budget would gladden the business community of the country. While concessions in the form of reduction in export duty on traditional items like tea, jute etc., tax holidays for new industries to be set up in the country, higher exemption limits for dividends from the incidence of taxation have been made for the benefit of the big bourgeoisie, no such relief for the common people who are already at the starvation level has been contemplated by the Finance Minister in the new budget. The outstanding feature of this budget is the pattern of taxation—while indirect taxes in the form of excise duty have been imposed on sugar, the finer variety of cloth, the cigarettes, the fertilisers, the motor spirit, jute hesian, soap, caustic soda, kerosene etc., which will inevitably result in pushing up the prices of commodities of common consumption, the quantum of revenue to be funnelled to the national exchequer through direct taxes is proportionately meagre. Everybody knows that the burden of indirect taxation is always borne by the common consuming people. It is not the manufacturers or the industrialists who shoulder the additional burden by reducing their profit, but they simply pass on it to the consuming public whose purchasing power has already shrunk to the lowest level due to capitalist exploitation in the country.

The keynote of Mr. Desai's fiscal policy, as he puts it, is to stimulate the economic activity, to maintain the recent upward trend of production after a prolonged phase of recession, and to secure a firmer ground for an independent national economy. But it is foolish to believe that Mr. Desai's hopes and assumptions have any valid reason if we analyse the present economic structure of the society and the deep crisis which is always associating with it. Since what prevails in the country is the capitalist

mode of production and the entire economic system is based on earning maximum profit of the capitalists, the

BY

BIPLAB SEN

economy cannot thrive unless assured of market where commodities can be sold at the level of the capitalist's greed for maximum profit. But the picture and prospect of market both domestic and foreign is bleak. The internal home market due to lowering of the purchasing power of

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Proletarian Era

ORGAN OF SOCIALIST UNITY CENTRE OF INDIA
(Fortnightly)

Editor-in Chief—Shibdas Ghosh

VOL 2
No. 2

MARCH 31, 1969
MONDAY

PRICE
20 P.

U.T.U.C. STATEMENT ON THE FORMATION OF TRIPARTITE COMMITTEE ON MASS RETRENCHMENT

Sri Fatick Ghosh, Secretary, West Bengal State Committee, United Trades Union Congress (48, Dharmatala Street) has issued the following statement to the press. :

"The Government of West Bengal in the Labour Department by an Order No. 3625 (12) T.R. dated 18th June 1968, set up a Tripartite Committee, to decide the composition scope and functioning of a machinery going to be set up for examining on merit cases of mass retrenchment and mass lay-off in the Industries. *The Government expected that the Tripartite Committee's recommendations would be unanimous.* According to this desire of the Government, the members of the Tripartite Committee tried their best to come to an agreed decision about the composition of the machinery. But unfortunately, because of the adamant attitude of the A.I.T.U.C. representative this could not be done.

"We suggested that the machinery should include the representatives of all the Central T.U. organisations that are represented in the Tripartite Committee. Because in the state of affairs obtaining at present in the Trade Union field in our country, it is naive to expect that if three representatives from the side of the workers are there in the machinery overriding the

just claim of three other T.U. organisations, the agreement cannot satisfy those whose representations will be left out of the machinery. This difficulty can be avoided if all the trade union organisations are represented in the machinery periodically by rotation. Our organisation made this suggestion. But though informally the A.I.T.U.C. representative agreed to it, this provision was left out of the proceedings. It is expected that the A.I.T.U.C. will unitedly work along with other Trade Union organisations that are led by the constituent parties of the U.F. But strangely enough the A.I. T.U.C. made common cause with I.N.T.U.C. against our U.T.U.C. in matters like mass lay-off and retrenchment. The A.I.T.U.C. had preferred the I.N.T.U.C. dominated by the Congress, to a left-oriented organisation like our U.T.U.C. We apprehend that this combination between the A.I.T.U.C. and the I.N.T.U.C., will work against the genuine interest of the workers and weaken the unity of fighting Trade Union forces. In the circumstances we cannot but disapprove the sectarian anti-left stand taken by the A.I.T.U.C.

Story Behind The Distribution Of Ministerial Portfolios In West Bengal

CPI(M)'s Obdurate Attitude Weakens The Unity Of The United Front

Some political parties and newspapers tried to distort our statements and handouts issued at different times regarding the question of distribution of portfolios among the partners of the United Front just on the eve of the formation of the Ministry. As a result, it created a good deal of confusion among the people as to our political stand on this controversial issue. In order to acquaint the readers of our actual position and our proposals on this crucial issue of ministry-making, we are reprinting all our statements issued at different stages in course of discussion among the U.F. partners.—Ed. P. E.

STATEMENT OF 16th FEBRUARY

The Secretariat of the West Bengal State Committee of the Socialist Unity Centre of India, in a meeting held today, has adopted the following resolution :—

“The Secretariat of the West Bengal State Committee of the Socialist Unity Centre of India hails the people of the State for their solid support for the United Front and routing the Congress in the last mid-term election. The people have, indeed, scored a big and unprecedented victory against the anti-people forces represented by the Congress and other reactionary parties.

“The Secretariat thinks that it would be wrong to conclude from the result of the election that the people of West Bengal have reposed confidence in any particular Party except here and there in some pockets. The people have expressed confidence in the United Front as a whole. They have most unambiguously expressed their strong support for the last United Front Ministry and the policies followed by it against which the Congress carried on bitter propaganda during its election campaign. They by their action have expressed complete denunciation by them of the Congress policy of undemocratically removing the United Front Ministry.

“The Secretariat notes that the CPI(M) has emerged as the single largest party in the legislature. Its and some other party's increased strength

should, in all-fairness, be taken into consideration and given due representation in the Cabinet. In view of its emergence as the single largest party the CPI(M)'s claim for Chief Ministership is naturally justified. But considering the present composition of the United Front and the mood of the people expressed in the election the Secretariat feels that any notable change of portfolio from the last United Front Ministry in the composition of the Cabinet may create apprehension in the mind of the people and thereby weaken the unity of the United Front. To remove all ground of such apprehension the Secretariat is of the opinion that in the present circumstances the best thing will be to allow the old United Front Ministry in the main with increased proportionate quota of Cabinet Ministers for the CPI(M) and CPI (less the defectors, defeated and others not joining the United Front Ministry) to continue.

The Secretariat, while hailing the masses for their unprecedented support for the United Front cannot but sound a note of caution. It is more than certain that even after their crushing defeat in the election the Congress, reactionary forces, vested interests and a section of bureaucracy and police will not refrain from making conspiracy to frustrate the programme adopted by the United Front and malign it in the eye of the

people of this State. Only politically conscious people, their vigilance and organised movement can foil all such sinister moves and at the same time can keep the United Front Ministry on the right track.”

STATEMENT OF 19th FEBRUARY

Dear friend,

We cannot but feel concerned at the deadlock that now continues on the question of composition of the Cabinet in West Bengal. Guided by the desire to end that deadlock, we submit the following for your consideration.

In course of discussions in the United Front and between different constituent parties of the United Front certain points have appeared to us to come out as agreed. It seems to us that, firstly, it is agreed that the result of the last mid-term election expresses the confidence of the people of this state in the United Front as a whole and not in any single party except in some particular cases here and there; secondly, though the victory in the election has been the victory of the United Front as a whole yet, nobody can deny the fact that the CPI(M) has emerged as the single largest party in the legislature (a new element which was absent at the time of formation of the last United Front Ministry). In view of the emergence of the CPI(M) as the single largest party in the Assembly, its claim for Chief Ministership is naturally justified.

This being the position, the problem before the United Front is, on the one hand, to keep the image of the last United Front Ministry untarnished, thereby giving no scope for apprehension in the mind of the people, and, on the other hand, to ensure to the CPI(M) due and rightful representation in the compo-

sition and functioning of the Cabinet commensurate with its considerably increased strength. It seems to us that the CPI(M) also has realised the situation and, hence agreed to the post of Chief Ministership being given to Ajoy Babu. We appreciate this stand of the CPI(M). But thereafter we have not moved a step forward; a deadlock continues on the question of distribution of the Home Portfolio.

This deadlock is providing opportunities to the vested interests and reactionary forces to create confusion among the people. The people too, who a few days back extended massive support to the United Front in the election, have started growing apprehensive about the unity of the United Front and its future. If this deadlock continues, we feel, the image of the United Front will be irreparably damaged.

We hoped that the big parties in the United Front would come out with a comprehensive proposal about the composition of the Cabinet showing distribution of important portfolios to end the deadlock. But uptill now no such proposal has come. During the discussions it has appeared to us that the present deadlock can be avoided if the Home portfolio along with some other important portfolios is given to the CPI (M) and due quota of Cabinet membership commensurate with its increased strength is allotted to it. Keeping all the above mentioned facts in view, we submit our proposal with regard to the composition of the Cabinet (number of Ministers of different parties and distribution of important portfolios included in the hope that this may at least serve as a basis of ending the present deadlock.

With greetings,
Fraternally yours,
(NIHAR MUKHERJEE)
Secretary,
West Bengal State Committee
S.U.C.I.

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INTRODUCING OUR MLA'S



Comrade Probodh Purkait : Kultali

Comrade Probodh Purkait who was first elected in 1967 election, is a member of the South 24-Parganas District Committee of the S.U.C. He is also a member of the South 24-Parganas District Committee of West Bengal K. & KMF.



Comrade Robin Mondal : Pathar Pratima

Comrade Robin Mondal was first elected to the West Bengal Assembly in 1967. He is a member of the District Secretariat of South 24-Parganas District Committee of S.U.C. He is also a leading member of the W. B. State Committee of Krishak & Khet Majoor Federation.



Comrade Renupada Haldar : Mathurapur

Comrade Renupada Haldar, a member of the District Secretariat, South 24-Parganas District Committee of



Comrade Protiva Mukherjee : Suri

Comrade Protiva Mukherjee, a Minister of State in the present U.F. Cabinet of West Bengal, is a member of the W. B. State Committee, S.U.C., and Secretary, Birbhum District Committee. She is the President of Birbhum Zilla Rickshaw Workers' Union, Suri Municipal Workers' Union, Birbhum Clay Mines & Firebricks and Oil Mills Mazdoor Union, Birbhum Central Co-operative Bank Employees' Union and Birbhum Biri Mazdoor Union.

Com. Mukherjee is also the editor of a local weekly, 'Awaz', published from Suri.



Comrade Bazle Ahmad : Murarai

Comrade Bazle Ahmad, an important member of the Birbhum District Committee of the party, was first elected to the Assembly in 1967. He is the President of Birbhum District Rice & Oil Mills Mazdoor Union and Rajgaon Stone Quarry Workers' Union.

He is the Secretary of Murarai A. K. Institution and Murarai Thana Sanskriti Parishad.

S.U.C. was first elected to the Assembly in 1957. He is a leading member of the State Committee of the K. & K. M.F. He is the President of South 24-Parganas P.W.D. Workers' Union and Bidi Sramik Union, Vice-President, Dakshinanchal Rickshaw Chalak Union and Assistant Secretary of W. B. Dokan Karmachari Samity and W. B. Rice Mills Mazdoor Union.

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CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY EPISODE

Comrade Krishna Chakravarty, Secretary of West Bengal State Committee of the Democratic Student's Organisation (D. S. O.) issued the following Statement on 14th March to the Press regarding the recent happenings in the Calcutta University.

"We feel it necessary to draw the attention of the general students regarding the incidents centering round gherao of the Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University and freeing him from the same yesterday (13th March). News appeared in newspapers involving our organisation in connection with rescuing the Vice-Chancellor from gherao is completely baseless. We like to state clearly that our organisation had no relation with the incidents that took place yesterday in the University campus.

"We like to put forward in this connection the viewpoints of our organisation on the main demands on the basis of which Naxalite Students' Federation was conducting 'gherao' movement. The first and foremost demand of this movement is in connection with the election of the Union. It is a democratic demand and no democratic-minded people can deny the justifiability of this demand. Even the Vice-Chancellor of the University agreed to this and conceded the demand.

"Further, we feel that the matter of withdrawal of Rs. 6000/- and spending the same by the old Union is to be considered carefully. We agree that as the life of the old Union is extended for another year by the Syndicate, the former has a legal right to withdraw and spend money from the Union Fund. But though legal, its legitimacy may be questioned. And in this case too, the legitimacy of the Old Union's right to spend money may be justifiably challenged. But if anybody raises the question and wants redressal after the Union has withdrawn the money and already spent a part of it,

complication naturally develops. Still we feel that the case should be resolved through discussion across the table.

"Thirdly, the role of teachers in this movement has also been in question. If the teachers want to interfere in the movement we are of the opinion that, they should not think only in terms of freeing the Vice-Chancellor from gherao, but they will have to shoulder the responsibility of solving the entire question including the main demands of the movement, failing which only bitterness will be created between the teacher and the taught.

"Now we like to draw attention to certain aspects of the methods of the movement. Firstly, in case of conducting democratic movement on the basis of certain democratic demands attempt should be made to launch a united movement with other democratic forces. The leading organisation (Naxalite Students' Federation) did not discuss the issue with other progressive students' organisations and it is clear from the stand they have taken that they think no other students' organisation in the country is progressive excepting theirs and they alone represent the militant student's community. Guided by this attitude they did not ask other progressive students' organisations to participate in the movement. Neither they discussed with them.

"Secondly, a section of the people is questioning the justifiability of gheraoing the Vice-Chancellor of the University. As regards this we like to state clearly that gherao, stay-in-strike, strikes etc. are all but different forms of

democratic movements and if required, all these forms may be adopted. If put into effective use in case of necessity, none of these forms is neither condemnable nor undemocratic. Now we may ask whether the gherao of the 14th March is justified. We consider that the gherao on 14th March is inopportune. Because, the Vice-Chancellor expressed his willingness to talk with all students' organisations including Naxalite Students' Federation on the very next day. Under the circumstances, it has not been proper for them to gherao Vice-Chancellor without waiting for the discussion with the Vice-Chancellor.

"We are of this opinion that indecent behaviour, insult on teachers or destruction of property of the educational institution during the movement cannot be justified under any circumstances. The leadership will have to bear the full responsibility of any such incident during the movement. Side by side we would also like to make it clear that when the main demands of the movement are wholly or partially just, even if the methods adopted in the movement are incorrect or not timely, we are against the use of force against participants of the movement simply because of the fact that the movement is being conducted by any particular organisation. Under the circumstances the first task should have been to wage a political campaign against the wrong line pursued by the leaders of the movement, in order to rectify the leadership. And then even if we had failed to pursue the leaders, we could have at least convinced, by virtue of our patient political persuasion, the general students participating in the movement as also the masses of students standing outside the ring about the incorrect path, thus freeing them from the illusion of the leadership. Only that would have helped to channelise the movement in the correct way. Under the circumstances as the Naxalite Students' Federation Committee committed mistakes

at different stages so also those who adopted force to free the Vice-Chancellor from gherao have not taken the correct political line. It seems from the aforesaid behaviour of the Naxalite students that they were more prone to use any incident to further their own adventurist viewpoint instead of developing the movement and similarly the other side also, was guided by a mentality of teaching the Naxalite students a lesson by any means instead of taking recourse to patient political persuasion. As a result the attack and counter attack that followed through division of democratic forces, resulted in the painful death of an young worker. In consequence there has been unnecessary wastage of energy of democratic movement. It is true that democratic environment of an educational institution should not be polluted by the entry of police in it, neither the students be used as an alternative to police to tarnish the democratic environment of the educational institutions by throwing stones, hurling bombs etc.

"Guided by the above viewpoint neither we participated in the movement for the gherao of the Vice-Chancellor nor we felt it justified to participate in the counter move to rescue the Vice-Chancellor from gherao.

"Lastly another point is also to be mentioned. S.U.C. made U.F. accept last time the vital principle "Police should not interfere in legitimate democratic movement" for the growth of democratic and revolutionary movements in West Bengal as well as in India. The reactionary forces, revisionists and reformists had been conspiring since the previous occasion to get this policy reversed. But they were not successful previously. This time also they are variously conspiring for the same. Under the circumstances we appeal to all democratic organisations not to do any such thing by which this conspiracy of the reactionary forces, revisionists and the reformists is strengthened."

THE ASSAM STATE COMMITTEE ORGANISES SCHOOL AT GAUHATI



Comrade Shibdas Ghosh addressing a large gathering at Nabin Bardoloi Hall Gauhati, Assam, organised by the Assam State Committee of the Socialist Unity Centre of India. Comrade Ghosh also conducted a school of politics at Gauhati and discussed on some fundamental issues of Marxism-Leninism and other vital socio-economic problems confronting our national life. His discussions created much enthusiasm among those present in the meeting and the school.

CPI (M) Says The Contrary S.U.C. Holds Protest Rally Against Military Rulers In Pakistan

GANASAKTI, the evening Bengali daily of CPI (M) has published on 27. 2. 69, a despatch from Delhi by their special correspondent analysing the mid-term election results. His analysis shows that the CPI (M) has secured the highest average votes. As per his analysis the position of average votes polled by the candidates (Party-wise) stands as follows :

CPI (M)	—	27,597.5
CPI	—	26,040.8
F. B.	—	23,988
Bengla Cong.	—	22,319

The Frontier, a leading English weekly has published a different story in its issue of 1. 3. 69. As per Frontier's analysis the position is as follows :

SUC	—	28,960
CPI (M)	—	27,376
CPI	—	26,069

The West Bengal State Committee of Socialist Unity Centre of India organised a meeting on Thursday the 27th March, held at Raja Subodh Mullick Square, Calcutta on the occasion of the recent happenings in Pakistan and adopted a resolution warmly hailing the heroic struggle conducted by the people of Pakistan against the autocratic dictatorial rule of Ayub Khan for the fulfilment of their national aspirations. The

The Ganasakti has not even shown the courtesy of mentioning the name of SUC, not to speak of the statistics. We don't know whether this is a sample of the democratic norms they have been practising so long. Let the readers judge themselves about the honesty and the nature of journalism which is practiced by CPI (M).

resolution also condemned the imposition of military rule in Pakistan with a view to crush the popular upsurge of the people. Com. Protiva Mukherjee a member of the West Bengal U.F. cabinet of ministers, Com. Probhas Ghosh & Com. Bazle Ahmed spoke in the meeting.

The meeting was presided over by Com. Asutosh Banerjee. After it was over, a big procession consisting of thousands of party workers and associates went on to Pakistan consul office in Calcutta for handing over the resolution.

Statement about ownership and other particulars about newspaper

Proletarian Era

Form IV (See Rule 8)

1. Place of Publication—48, Dharamtolla Street. Cal-13
2. Periodicity of its Publication—Fortnightly.
3. Printer's Name—Sukomal Das Gupta.
Nationality—Indian.
Address—48, Dharamtolla Street, Cal-13.
4. Publisher's Name—Sukomal Das Gupta,
Nationality—Indian.
Address—48, Dharamtolla Street, Cal-13.
5. Editor's Name—Sukomal Das Gupta.
Nationality—Indian.
Address—48, Dharamtolla Street, Cal-13
6. Owner—Socialist Unity Centre of India.

I, Sukomal Das Gupta hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Sd. Sukomal Das Gupta

Desai's New Offensive Against Toiling People Cannot Save Capitalism From Its Doom

(Continued from page 1)

the people cannot provide the base for an uninterrupted industrial growth. The peasants which constitute the bulk of the Indian population are in the throes of perpetual miseries and their capacity for consumption of industrial goods has reduced considerably due to their appalling poverty and indebtedness. The ruling capitalist class for fear of working class revolution has sought alliance with the rural bourgeoisie and is incapable of introducing radical land reforms, which alone can improve within certain limit the lot of the poor peasantry. It is this sordid state of the peasantry coupled with the growing unemployment of workers and employees in the urban areas which is mainly responsible for the consequent retardation in the industrial activity. There are other powerful factors which have contributed appreciably to this economic crisis of capitalism. The greed and plunder of the monopoly capitalists who are moulding the economic policies of the Congress, the heavy burden of taxes over the people, the ever-increasing price spiral of foodgrains and all other essential commodities which sphere is absolutely dominated by the jotedars, the hoarders, and the blackmarketeers with the blessings of the Congress, have its tremendous impact on the purchasing power of the people and resulted in the dropping of industrial productivity on a big scale. While the Congress leaders often clamour for wage freeze policy of workers and employees and sing the same song of woes of the Big Business, they are unable to see the wood behind the tree that it is capitalism in the first place, which is messing up the whole economy and

impeding industrial progress. The working class along with the other labouring masses have to wage constant fierce battles against the monopoly capitalists, the rural bourgeoisie, and the bureaucracy to defend their already staggering existence. The latest fiscal measures will further lower the economic position of the people and deepen the crisis.

Since the internal demand for industrial goods is constantly falling, not only expansion of industries is an impossible thing, but the present capacity for production cannot also be fully utilized. Such a state of thing has driven the Big Business to a position of laying greater emphasis on the foreign market. The Finance Minister, realising this imperative need of the capitalists for an outlet of goods outside the country has been generous in offering concessions to encourage business in the foreign field. But here too, the prospect is not so bright. As the international capitalist market has contracted immeasurably after the World War II, when a number of countries becoming socialist, went out of the orbit of the capitalist influence and most of the colonies and semi-colonies achieved independence, the imperialist countries themselves are frantically searching for newer markets and other avenues for keeping the industries going. In the post-war world situation, the conflicts within the capitalist-imperialist camp are accumulating, with ever deepening crisis of market. Though India is developing trade with the socialist camp, the major portion of its traffic is still tied with the traditional markets which belong to the capitalist-imperialist camp. Any economic planning based on

the expectation of expanding foreign markets where powerful imperialist countries are still holding sway, is bound to fail and cannot promote industrial growth to any sizable extent.

About the independence of our national economy the less said the better. While Rs. 825 crores have been expected to be drawn as foreign loan in the budget of 1968-69 Rs. 200 crores will be required for repayment of foreign debts. The amount of debt to be raised outside India at the end of 1969-70 would be Rs. 6,569.50 crores. A curious phenomenon is however observed that though India is starved of capital and is importing capital from outside, the monopoly capitalists are mobilising its resources outside the country and are sponsoring joint ventures along with the imperialist powers there. Although in this way it is trying to make some headway in the foreign market by remaining as junior partner in these enterprises and the Indian capitalist Government in return, is making out the most heinous concessions and practically selling the country to the interests of the foreign monopolists, the Indian capitalist class will be plunged into a deeper crisis in the domestic front. The industries set up on foreign soil will further squeeze the export potential of the domestic goods. A section of the Indian national bourgeoisie, in order to tide over the prevailing difficulties in the economic field, is pressing over a long period for ending the present hostility with China and to strengthen India's trade link with them. But that is also not reflected in the central budget as the dominating section of the monopoly capitalists does not favour any

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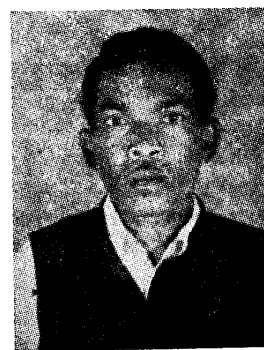
Introducing Our MLA'S

(Continued from page 3)



Comrade Subodh Banerjee :
Joynagar

A Cabinet Minister in the present U.F. Govt., Com. Banerjee is a member of the Central Committee and Politburo of the party. Com. Banerjee is the General Secretary of the W.B. branch of U.T.U.C. (48, Dharmatala St.), President of W.B. Engineering Workers' Union, W.B. Jute Mills Workers' Union, W.B. Rice Mills Mazdur Union, Calcutta University Employees' Union and Krishak & Khet Majoor Federation (K & K.M.F.). He is also a member of Editorial Boards of 'Ganadabi' (Bengali) and 'Socialist Unity' and 'Proletarian Era' (English organs of S.U.C.I.)



Comrade Haripada Bauri :
Raghunathpur

Com. Haripada Bauri, the founder organiser of Purulia District Bidi Workers' Union, is an important organiser of the party. Com. Bauri is a new face in the Assembly.

Our Statement On The Question Of Ministry Making

(Continued from page 2)

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, Secretary, West Bengal State Committee of the Socialist Unity Centre of India, issued the following statement to the press on February, 24 last :

STATEMENT OF 24th FEBRUARY

"Many confusing reports about our Party, the Socialist Unity Centre of India, in connection with Ministry-making in West Bengal have come out in the Press during the last several days. We deem it our duty to clarify our position in this regard.

"We like to reiterate that our Party thinks that it would be wrong to conclude from the result of mid-term election in this State that the people have reposed confidence in any particular Party except in some specific cases here and there. The people have, in fact, reposed confidence in the United Front as a whole, expressed their strong support for the last United Front Ministry and the policies followed by it, especially those policies which were bitterly attacked and made election-issues by the Congress against the United Front in course of election campaign (as for example, the labour policy of the United Front Government) and denounced the Congress conspiracy of most undemocratically removing the United Front Ministry from office.

"Though our Party is of the considered view that the victory in the mid-term election has been the victory of the United Front as a whole except in some pockets here and there, it is not oblivious of the fact that the CPI (M) has emerged as the single largest party in the Legislative Assembly (a new element which was absent at the time of formation of the last United Front Ministry). In view of the emergence of the CPI (M) as such, its claim for Chief Ministership was naturally justified.

"This being the position, our Party felt that the task of the United Front in the matter of composition of the Cabinet was to co-relate the question of keeping the image of the last United Front Ministry untarnished, so as not to give any scope for apprehension in the mind of the people, with the question of ensuring to the CPI (M) due and rightful representation in the composition and functioning of the Cabinet commensurate with its considerably increased strength.

"The grounds, consideration of which prompted the CPI (M) to forgo its claim for Chief Ministership in favour of Ajoy Babu, apply with greater force in case of our demand for Labour Ministership. Accordingly, we claimed that the Labour portfolio should be given to us. It may be recalled that at the time of formation of the last United Front Ministry no party was agreeable to accept the Labour portfolio. In fact the CPI(M), CPI,RSP and some other parties refused to accept it when this portfolio was offered to them one after another. Our Party then took upon itself the responsibility of handling this difficult Department. The Labour policy of the last United Front Government was symbolised in its Labour Minister, Com. Subodh Banerjee, against whom the monopolists, bourgeois Press, Congress and other reactionary parties combined and carried the severest attacks. These anti-people forces all through tried to anyhow dislodge Com. Banerjee from the post of Labour Ministership. In the circumstances, any change in

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West Bengal State Committee's Letter

To

The Joint Conveners and the Constituent Parties of the U.F. Calcutta.

2nd March, 1969.

Dear friend,

As a working class Party and as a constituent of the United Front we cannot but feel deeply concerned over the incident, as reported in the Press, at Kidderpore on 27. 2. 1969 in connection with a labour dispute in which the police lathi-charged and tear-gassed the workers.

We are constrained to note that, within 48 hours of the installation of the popular U.F. Ministry, such a serious and grave incident occurred but the concerned Ministry, till now has not clarified the position either before the public or to the constituents of the U.F. On the contrary, we painfully find that the Labour Minister, as the Press report goes, instructed the police to act according to Law and if necessity arises to apply force but mildly. It would surely not be out of context to draw your attention to the fact that Sri Jyoti Basu, Deputy Chief Minister and Minister-in-charge of Home (Police), in course of his public speeches (just after the Mid-term poll) and also during his talk with the press reporters, as reported in the Press, has created some amount of confusion and given scope of apprehension about the U.F.'s Labour Policy. Because nowhere he has mentioned anything regarding the accepted basic stand of the U.F. of non-interference of police in legitimate and democratic trade union and mass movements.

Considering carefully the entire background and the delay on the part of the Labour Minister to state in clear and categorical terms its Labour Policy, we feel it our bounden duty to request you to call an emergency meeting of the U.F. at an early date.

We further suggest that the U.F. should also discuss the

food issue in its next meeting because some amount of confusion has already been created by the statement of the Food Minister, which, in our view, suffers from one-sidedness. Due stress has reasonably been laid on the responsibility of the Central Government in meeting the deficit of food in our State. But it is our considered view that the question of internal procurement is of no less importance. To make internal procurement a success, and to ensure normal supply of food in the market, the first and foremost tasks in our view, should be to take concrete steps to break the armed reactionary chain of the hoarders, jotedars and the black-marketeers, which is in operation in coalescence with the corrupt police administration (known even to commoners). But we feel disappointed to note that no concrete policy statement, whatsoever, has yet come out in the Press.

The issue of food being of vital importance, the U.F. cannot afford to lose time. So, concrete measures to break the above mentioned chain should immediately be taken up by the U.F.

We further note that the Education Minister in a press statement has declared, as reported in the Press, that he has decided to introduce 12-year School Course in West Bengal. We are at a loss to understand how the Education Minister can make such a policy statement on such a controversial issue before having it thoroughly discussed and decided in the U.F. This, in our view, involves a serious question concerning the code and conduct and the decorum to be followed by the Ministry and the individual members of the Cabinet.

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Our Statement On The Question Of Ministry Making

(Continued from page 7)

the distribution of the Labour portfolio may be construed as surrender to the pressure of the monopolists, to the detriment of the image of the United Front in the estimation of the people and its influence on them. This feeling of ours was shared by some other constituent parties of the United Front. But the CPI(M) refused to acknowledge the justness of our claim for the Labour portfolio and has, so far, advanced no logic other than its obduracy that it must retain this portfolio.

"Placed in such an unreasonable situation our Party decided that, though it should continue to be represented in the Cabinet, Com. Banerjee should be out of it. When the report of Com. Banerjee's remaining out of the Cabinet somehow came out in the Press, innumerable friends and supporters approached our Party with the request that Com. Banerjee should not be taken out of the Cabinet. One of such friends was Syed Badruddoza who was kind enough to request that Com. Banerjee should be in the Cabinet in the interest of safeguarding the interests of the minority Muslim community. Some constituent parties in the United Front made similar requests. It became very difficult for our Party to turn down these requests by friends and fraternal parties. Accordingly, we decided that Com. Banerjee should be in the Cabinet.

"Even the CPI (M) leaders repeatedly said in course of discussion that if Com. Banerjee joined the Cabinet some important portfolio would be given to him. But when we informed the CPI (M) that Com. Banerjee would

join, we, to our surprise, found that no important portfolio had been allotted to him. Our claim for Land and Land Revenue Department was not conceded. Our claim for Agriculture Department was not considered. We were ready to accept the Education portfolio. But that too was refused. At this stage the CPI (Biswanath Babu and Somnath Babu) suggested that the Education portfolio should be divided into Higher and Technical Education on the one hand and the rest on the other and that the former might be given to Com. Subodh Banerjee. When this was said by us the CPI (M)'s reply (Harekrishna Babu) was "such a division would not be made; and if it is made at all why should we give it to Subodh Babu? We shall better give it to the Workers' Party, which is our close ally".

"Thereafter it was found that the CPI (M) was contemplating to get rid of the Food portfolio. Indications of its being allotted to the RCPI were noticeable. Our Party then proposed that if the CPI (M), largest single party, was not ready to shoulder the responsibility of the Food Department, our Party would gladly take the responsibility as it had done last time in case of the Labour Department. But this time also the CPI (M) refused to give us the Food portfolio, which has been allotted to the RCPI. We have been given the PWD.

"Let the people judge if justice has been done to us or not." Our party requests the people to judge if such an obdurate unreasonable stand on the part of the CPI (M) is strengthening or weakening the unity of the United Front.

Central Budget

(Continued from page 6)

such reorientation of policies with regard to China, for their present love for and zeal of collaboration with the imperialist powers. Thus Mr. Desai's export-oriented scheme is bound to fare badly in fulfilling its desired objective.

Another notable feature of this budget is the amount earmarked for defence. The Indian capitalist class is making an exhilarating experiment like its counterparts in the imperialist countries by taking resort to artificial stimulation of industries, owned by the monopolists, in the form of increased defence budget—but such an experiment is bound to be inadequate to alter the existing crisis-ridden climate of industries and boost up industrial production for any durable period. In 1965 such an experiment was gone through by the Indian bourgeoisie when the Indo-Pak war broke out. A few fold increase in the defence expenditure was incurred then and the industries enjoyed a period of relative boom. But as the war came to an end, the boom could not be continued and the industries had to face severe crisis after only a brief spell of buoyancy due to war. But such a lesson, perhaps has failed to make any imprint on Mr. Desai's mind as he clings to an increased defence budget for the rescue of the Indian capitalists. Out of the total outlay of Rs. 4,980 crores, Rs. 1100 crores has been allocated for defence services. When the bulk of the people are starved and find no employment, it can be termed as a heartless budget. When the people cry and struggle for relief simply to carry on their existence the Congress rulers do not hesitate to create bloodbath with the help of the military and the police. The machinery which is crushing the popular legitimate movements of all

Jalpaiguri Meeting

Comrade Shibdas Ghosh General Secretary of S.U.C.I. initiated a lively discussion at a selected gathering organised by Jalpaiguri District unit of S.U.C. at Jalpaiguri Dharma-sala Hall on 18th March 1969. More than two hundred party comrades, supporters and sympathisers participated in this meeting which was presided over by Comrade Joydev Mondal. In this meeting Comrade Shibdas Ghosh lucidly explained the necessity of the formation of S.U.C.I. in spite of the existence of two Communist parties. The discussion created much enthusiasm and interest amongst the audience.

Our Letter

(Continued from page 7)

We hope, that considering the urgency of the situation the constituent Parties of the U.F. will promptly respond to take initiative to see that an early meeting of the United Front is convened and the above mentioned issues are discussed.

With greetings,

Fraternally yours,
(NIHAR MUKHERJEE)
Secretary,
West Bengal State Committee
S.U.C.I.

the democratic sections of the people has to be strengthened in the interest of the monopoly capitalists, the official bureaucrats, and the rural vested interests, whatever might be the plight of the people! Such is perhaps the logic of Mr. Desai, when without any hesitation or prick of conscience, if he has it at all, he increased the allocation in the defence field even surpassing all the previous figures. It is easy to realise that the budget in question is a capitalist one and it signifies more deprivation of the common masses.